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BEAMINSTER

RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL

ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

FOR THE YEAR 1938

Medical Officer of Health :

ADAM ARMIT, M.B., CH.B., D.P.H.

Sanitary Inspector :

C. C. RUNDLE, A.R.S.I., M.S.I.A.

Clerk to the Medical Officer :

MISS S. BRANIGAN.

W. FROST, PRINTER, BRIDPORT.

SECTION A.

STATISTICS AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS OF THE AREA

Area (in Acres)	58,693
Registrar-General's Estimate of resident population, mid-year, 1938	7,635
Number of Persons per Acre	0.13
Number of Inhabited Houses	2,423
Rateable Value	£29,603
Sum represented by a Penny Rate	£131

NATURAL AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS

This district stretches from Bridport Rural District in the South to the Somerset Border in the North, and from the Devon Border in the West to the Dorchester Rural District in the East. It is composed of 26 parishes.

RAINFALL

	1938	1937
January	4.38	6.71
February	1.48	6.87
March	0.23	4.68
April	0.19	2.46
May	2.88	3.28
June	1.50	1.36
July	3.85	3.39
August	2.43	1.07
September ...	1.91	3.30
October	5.01	4.80
November ...	7.13	2.39
December ...	5.25	5.29
	36.24	45.60

I am obliged to Mr. W. Stiby for supplying the above data.

INDUSTRIES

Dairy farming is the chief industry. There are milk factories at Beaminster and Chard Junction.

VITAL STATISTICS

		Total	M.	F.	
Live Births	Legitimate ...	115	59	56	Birth Rate per 1,000 of the estimated resident population 16.5
	Illegitimate ...	11	7	4	
	Total	126	66	60	
Still Births—Total		3	2	1	Rate per 1,000 Total (live and still) Births 23.25
Legitimate		3	2	1	
Illegitimate... ...		0	0	0	

Deaths...	102	47	55	Crude Death Rate—13.4 Comparative Death Rate—10.85 Comparability Factor—0.81

		M.	F.
Deaths from Puerperal causes	0		
Deaths of Infants under 1 year of age...		4	5
Legitimate		4	5
Illegitimate		0	0

Infantile Death Rate 71 per 1,000 live births.

Deaths from Cancer (all ages)	16
,, ,, Measles (all ages)	1
,, ,, Whooping Cough (all ages)	2
,, ,, Diarrhoea (under 2 years of age) ...	1

COMPARATIVE VITAL STATISTICS

	Beaminster R.D.	Bridport R.D.	England & Wales
Birth Rate	16. 5	11. 6	15.61
Death Rate	10. 8	12.34	11. 6
Infantile Death Rate	71. 4	25. 3	53
Maternal Mortality Rate ...	0	0	2.97
Deaths from Diarrhoea and Enteritis under 2 years of age	9. 8	0	5. 5

Heart Disease ...	Was the cause of	28%	Total Deaths
Cancer	,,	15%	,,
Other Defined Diseases	,,	9%	,,
Cerebral Haemorrhage	,,	7%	,,
Congenital Debility ...	,,	6%	,,
Tuberculosis ...	,,	3%	,,

INFANTILE DEATHS

Age	Sex	Cause
5 hours ...	M	Premature Birth
2 days ...	F	Premature Birth
2 days ...	F	Premature Birth
3 days ...	M	Premature Birth
1 week ...	M	Premature Birth
1 week ...	F	(a) Cardiac Failure (b) Gastro-Enteritis
2 weeks ...	M	Premature Birth
9 months ...	F	Broncho Pneumonia
11 months ...	F	Terminal convulsions due to dentition complicated by Whooping Cough and Bronchitis

CAUSES OF DEATH

		Males	Females	
1	Typhoid and Paratyphoid ...	—	—	
2	Measles	1	—	
3	Scarlet Fever	—	—	
4	Whooping Cough	—	2	
5	Diphtheria	—	1	
6	Influenza	—	3	
7	Encephalitis Lethargica ...	—	—	
8	Cerebro-Spinal Fever	—	—	
9	Tuberculosis of Respiratory System	1	1	
10	Other Tuberculosis	1	—	
11	Syphilis	—	—	
12	G.P.I. Tabes	—	—	
13	Cancer	7	9	
14	Diabetes	—	—	
15	Cerebral Haemorrhage ...	3	4	
16	Heart Disease	14	15	
17	Aneurysm	—	—	
18	Other Circulatory Diseases ...	3	1	
19	Bronchitis	—	1	
20	Pneumonia (all forms) ...	1	1	
21	Other Respiratory Diseases ...	—	—	
22	Peptic Ulcer	—	1	
23	Diarrhoea (under 2 years) ...	—	1	
24	Appendicitis	1	—	
25	Cirrhosis of the Liver ...	—	—	
26	Other Liver Diseases	—	2	
27	Other Digestive Diseases ...	1	1	
28	Acute and Chronic Nephritis ...	1	1	
29	Puerperal Sepsis	—	—	
30	Other Puerperal Diseases ...	—	—	
31	Con. Debility. Prematurity. ...	4	2	
32	Senility	1	4	
33	Suicide	—	—	
34	Other Violence	2	2	
35	Other Defined Diseases ...	6	3	
36	Ill Defined or Unknown ...	—	—	
37	Diarrhoea over 2 years ...	—	—	
	Total ...	47	55	102

SECTION B

LABORATORY FACILITIES.

Bacteriological work has been carried out at the Southern Counties Laboratory at Bournemouth. The new County Laboratory at Dorchester was opened at the close of the year so that all bacteriological work for this district will be carried out there in future.

AMBULANCE FACILITIES.

These are adequate. Infectious cases are removed to the Isolation Hospital by the ambulance stationed at the Hospital, while non-infectious and accident cases are removed to the Cottage Hospital by the new Hospital ambulance (acquired in April) which is stationed at one of the garages in Bridport.

NURSING IN THE HOME.

The Dorset County Nursing Association has nurses resident in Beaminster, Broadwindsor, Corscombe, Evershot, Netherbury and Thorncombe. These nurses are also fully qualified midwives.

TREATMENT CENTRES AND CLINICS.

Maternity and Child Welfare Clinic. (Under Dorset County Council). Clinic held on second and fourth Thursdays of the month and Ante-Natal Clinic on the fourth Tuesday of the month at the Welfare Centre.

MIDWIVES.

Nine Midwives were registered by the County Council to practice in the Area.

HOSPITALS.

General Medical and General Surgical.

Most of the patients go to Bridport Cottage Hospital which contains 30 beds, including 2 maternity beds. Others go to Hospitals in Yeovil, Dorchester and Weymouth.

INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

There is an Isolation Hospital in Bridport Borough administered by a Joint Hospital Board, made up of representatives from the Boroughs of Bridport and Lyme Regis, and the Rural Districts of Bridport and Beaminster. No provision has been made for the hospital treatment of Small Pox.

CHRONIC SICKNESS

Public Assistance Hospital, Stoke Abbott.

SECTION C.

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA.

WATER.

12 parishes are wholly supplied with a piped supply and 4 with a partly piped supply. 10 parishes are completely without a piped supply. Beaminster Parish has a most excellent piped supply, the water being collected from an adit in Beaminster Downs, led into a reservoir, and from this by gravity to the town. This water is wholesome and sufficient and is sampled for analysis regularly. It is proposed to have this supply analysed every month during 1939.

In some of the parishes, collecting chambers are built round springs, the water being led to small reservoirs from which pipes feed the parish. In others, rams are installed to pump the water to higher levels so as to give the gravity feed.

No new supplies were provided during the year, but a great amount of exploratory work, including gaugings and sampling, was carried out with regard to new piped supplies proposed for the parishes of Mosterton, Thorncombe, Netherbury, Broadwindsor and Halstock. Lack of a piped supply of sufficient and wholesome water is a serious problem not only to the inhabitants of rural houses but also to a Rural Council when considering new housing proposals. Apart from employing water diviners on a proposed site for houses, wells have to be sunk, the water gauged and sampled for analysis. The whole site may have to be turned down because of insufficient or unwholesome water, thus adding considerably to housing expenses.

My remarks in last year's Report that this District lacks a sufficient and wholesome supply still hold good.

97 samples from wells, springs and other sources were taken during the year.

DRAINAGE AND SEWERAGE.

All new houses are compelled to have proper drainage and an efficient sewage treatment plant. Apart from these, and all Council Houses which have their own plant, the District cannot be said to be efficiently sewered or have proper sewage treatment, the result being that all the streams and ditches in the District are polluted. Beaminster is the worst offender in this respect, most of its crude sewage, with the exception of the Council Houses and a few cases where septic tanks are installed, being run into the river Brit untreated.

PUBLIC CLEANSING.

Dry household refuse from Beaminster and incombustible household refuse from Netherbury, South Perrott, Mosterton and Corscombe is collected and dumped at the tip in Stentford Lane, Beaminster. The proposed site for this tip was the subject of an Enquiry held by the Ministry and confirmed in January. As regards the other parishes only incombustible refuse is collected and dumped in some convenient spot, the collection in these cases being voluntary, or undertaken by the Parish Council on behalf of the District Council.

SANITARY INSPECTION OF THE AREA.

*No. of Inspections	...	789		
No. of Informal Notices	...	41	No. complied with	... 36
No. of Statutory Notices	...	4	No. complied with	... 3

* Excluding houses, cowsheds, dairies and slaughterhouses.

PETROLEUM SPIRIT AND CARBIDE.

39 petrol and 2 carbide licences were issued during the year.

SHOPS AND OFFICES.

Frequently inspected.

CAMPING SITES.

No licences were issued by the Local Authority during the year.

There are no sites in the District used habitually for camping purposes.

SMOKE ABATEMENT.

Numerous observations were made. 1 informal notice was served, the result being satisfactory.

SWIMMING AND BATHING POOLS.

There are no public nor privately owned swimming baths or pools open to the public.

ERADICATION OF BED BUGS.

No action was taken as no complaints were received.

SCHOOLS.

There has been no change since the last Report. Close co-operation exists between the Head School Teachers and the Medical Officer of Health regarding infectious diseases among school children. No school was closed during the year because of infectious disease.

SECTION D.

HOUSING

As a result of the rapid survey of houses in the area mentioned in last year's Report, the Council commenced tackling the problem of unfit houses parish by parish and at the end of the year 30 demolition orders were made. The Council have energetically tried to tackle the housing problem in this Area. They have ascertained the general need for houses in each parish including the need for houses by the agricultural class. One difficulty about rural houses is to find suitable sites having regard to the proximity of a water supply, access, drainage and nearness to the place of occupation. Before the end of March, 1939, 6 new houses were completed at Pattle, Beaminster. 6 were commenced at Melplash, 6 at Mosterton, 4 at Drimpton and negotiations for sites at Beaminster 34 houses, Corscombe 4, Evershot 4, Halstock 6, Marshwood 6, Netherbury 4, Bowood 6, Salway Ash 2, Powerstock 8, Stoke Abbott 4 and Thorncombe 12.

1. Inspection of Dwelling Houses during the Year.

1.	a.	Total No. of dwelling-houses inspected for housing defects (under Public Health or Housing Acts) ...	221
	b.	No. of Inspections made for the purpose ...	445
2.	a.	No. of dwelling-houses (included under sub-head (1) above) which were inspected and recorded under the Housing Consolidated Regulations, 1925 and 1932	81
	b.	No. of Inspections made for the purpose ...	89

3. No. of dwelling-houses found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation 113

4. No. of dwelling-houses (exclusive of those referred to under the preceding sub-head) found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation ... 62

2. Remedy of Defects during the Year without Service of Formal Notices

No. of defective dwelling-houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the Local Authority or their officers 3

3. Action under Statutory Powers during the Year.

a. Proceedings under sections 9, 10 and 16 of the Housing Act, 1936.

1. No. of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring repairs ... Nil
2. No. of dwelling-houses which were rendered fit after service of formal notices :—
   a. By owners ... ... Nil
   b. By Local Authority in default of owners ... ... Nil

b. Proceedings under Public Health Acts.

1. No. of dwelling houses in respect of which notices were served requiring defects to be remedied ... ... Nil
2. No. of dwelling-houses in which defects were remedied after service of formal notices :—
   a. By owners ... ... Nil
   b. By Local Authority in default of Owners ... ... Nil

c. Proceedings under Sections 11 and 13 of the Housing Act, 1936.

1. No. of dwelling-houses in respect of which Demolition Orders were made ... 30
2. No. of dwelling-houses demolished in pursuance of Demolition Orders ... ... Nil

d. Proceedings under section 12 of the Housing Act, 1936

1. No. of separate tenements or underground rooms in respect of which Closing Orders were made ... ... Nil
2. No. of separate tenements or underground rooms in respect of which Closing Orders were determined, the tenement or room having been rendered fit ... ... Nil

4. Housing Act, 1936—Part IV.—Overcrowding.

a.	1.	No. of dwelling-houses overcrowded at the end of the year	7
	2.	No. of families dwelling therein ...	7
	3.	No. of persons dwelling therein ...	62
b.		No. of new cases of overcrowding reported during the year	2
c.	1.	No. of cases of overcrowding relieved during the year	1
	2.	No. of persons concerned in such cases ...	5
d.		Particulars of any cases in which dwelling-houses have again become overcrowded after the Local Authority have taken steps for the abatement of overcrowding	Nil
5.		Total No. of new houses erected during 1938	9
		No. erected during 1938 with State Assistance	
		1. By Local Authority ...	Nil
		2. By other Bodies or Persons ...	Nil
		No. of houses owned by Local Authority ...	52
		Approximate No. of working-class houses in District	1600

SECTION E.

INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD.

Cowsheds and Dairies.

No. of Persons on Register at end of 1938...	452
No. of Dairy Farms and other dairy premises on Register at end of 1938	452
No. of Dairy Farms inspected during 1938	42
No. of Inspections during 1938	44
No. of Notices served—3 No. complied with ...	Not known
No. of Milkshops inspected during 1938	1
No. of Inspections	1
No. of Notices served—Nil No. Complied with	Nil

Pasteurised Milk.

There are no pasteurising plants in the ~~Borough~~. District

DAIRIES INSPECTION.

The Council in January 1939, advertised for a temporary additional Sanitary Inspector. All the farms and dairies should now be adequately inspected and the provisions of the Milk and Dairies Order enforced. As stated in last year's Report the bulk of the milk produced goes to milk factories. 2 samples were taken for bacteriological analysis, none for Tubercle Bacilli.

MEAT AND OTHER FOODS

There are 9 registered slaughter houses in the area. The Sanitary Inspector paid 414 visits to these during the year.

CARCASES INSPECTED AND CONDEMNED.

	Bovine	Calves	Sheep & Lambs	Pigs
No. killed (if known) ...		Not	Known	
No. Inspected ...	224	28	343	2020
All Diseases except Tuberculosis.				
Whole carcases condemned ...	—	—	—	1
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned ...	15	—	4	163
Percentage of the No. inspected affected with disease other than Tuberculosis ...	6·7%	—	—	8.1%
Tuberculosis only.				
Whole carcases condemned ...	—	—	—	10
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned ...	11	—	—	386
Percentage of the No. inspected affected with Tuberculosis ...	5%	—	—	19·6%

FOOD AND DRUGS.

16 samples were taken for analysis by the County Council and all were found to be genuine. The articles sampled were : Butter 2, Cocoa 1, Ground Almonds 1, Ground Ginger 1, Iodine Paint 1, Iodine, Tincture of, 1, Lard 1, Milk 7, Rice 1.

Chemical and bacteriological examinations of food are carried out at the County Council Laboratory, Dorchester.

NUTRITION.

No steps were taken during the year to increase the knowledge of the public on this subject by means of lectures, films, etc.

SECTION F.

PREVALENCE OF, & CONTROL OVER, INFECTIOUS & OTHER DISEASES

There were 17 cases of Scarlet Fever notified. Most of these occurred in one parish. Consultations took place with the Medical Officer of Health of an adjoining District where there were also many cases of Scarlet Fever in an attempt to stamp out the disease. Milk production was carefully watched and several milkers stopped from handling milk. Numerous throat swabs were taken during this period. No further cases occurred after the beginning of October. Close co-operation with the school authorities is maintained regarding Infectious Diseases. 74 cases of Measles, 60 cases of Whooping Cough, 30 cases of Mumps, 6 cases of Jaundice and 4 cases of Influenza were notified by the Head Teachers. The Council have taken no action with regard to the admission to the Hospital of such diseases as Measles, Whooping Cough and Influenza, nor has any action been taken to provide artificial immunisation against Diphtheria nor to the use of Measles Serum for Prophylaxis or Attenuation. There has been no change in Isolation Hospital accommodation.

25 houses were disinfected where notifiable Infections Diseases occurred.

PREVENTION OF BLINDNESS

No cases of Ophthalmia Neonatorum were notified.

TUBERCULOSIS

11 new cases of Tuberculosis were notified during the years Pulmonary male 4, Pulmonary female 4, Non-Pulmonary 3. There were 3 deaths from Tuberculosis. Pulmonary male 1, Pulmonary female 1, Non-Pulmonary male 1.

NEW CASES AND MORTALITY DURING 1938

	New Cases				Deaths			
	Pulmonary		Non-Pulmonary		Pulmonary		Non-Pulmonary	
Age	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
5–10	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
10–15	–	–	–	–	–	–	1	–
15–20	–	1	1	–	–	–	–	–
20–25	1	1	–	–	–	–	–	–
25–35	–	1	–	–	–	–	–	–
35–45	–	–	–	2	–	–	–	–
45–55	1	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
55–65	2	1	–	–	1	–	–	–
65 and over	–	–	–	–	–	1	–	–

DEATHS FROM TUBERCULOSIS 1938

Sex	Age	Occupation
Female	73	Spinster
Male	11	
Male	56	Carpenter

PUBLIC HEALTH (Prevention of Tuberculosis) REGULATIONS, 1925.

No. action was found to be necessary under the above Regulations.

CASES NOTIFIED.

DISEASE	Total cases at all ages	Under 1	1-2	2-3	3-4	4-5	5-10	10-15	15-20	20-35	35-45	45-65	65 & over	Total Deaths	Total cases removed to Hospital in District	Deaths in Hospital of persons belonging to District
Smallpox	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Diphtheria	6	...	...	...	...	1	1	1	1	1	...	1	...	1	5	1
Erysipelas	4	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	3	...	...	1	...
Scarlet Fever	17	...	2	...	1	...	9	3	1	...	...	1	...	...	16	...
Enteric Fever... ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Puerperal Pyrexia ...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...
Puerperal Fever ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Cerebro-Spinal Fever ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Acute Poliomyelitis ...	3	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	1	...	...	1	...	...	3	...
Ophthalmia Neonatorum	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Malaria	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Trench Fever	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Dysentry	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Encephalitis Lethargica	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Pneumonia	4	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	2	1	...	...	...
Pulmonary Tuberculosis	8	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	3	...	4	...	...	...	...
Non-Pulm. Tuberculosis	3	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	2	...	...	...	...	...
Combined Tuberculosis	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
TOTALS ...	46	–	2	–	1	1	10	5	6	5	3	12	1	1	25	1

FACTORIES, WORKSHOP AND WORKPLACES INSPECTION

Premises	Inspections	Number of Written Notices	Occupiers Prosecuted
Factories with mechanical power ...	4	–	–
Factories without mechanical power ...	13	3 verbal	–
Other Premises under the Act (including works of building and engineering construction but not including out-workers' premises).	–	–	–
Total ...	17	3	–

DEFECTS FOUND

Particulars	No. of Defects. Found	Remedied	Referred to H.M. Inspector.	No. of defects in respect of which prosecutions were instituted.
Want of cleanliness ...	3	3	–	–
Overcrowding ...	–	–	–	–
Unreasonable temperature ...	–	–	–	–
Inadequate ventilation .	–	–	–	–
Ineffective drainage of floors	–	–	–	–
Sanitary Conveniences: Insufficient ...	–	–	–	–
Sanitary Conveniences: Unsuitable or defective ...	–	–	–	–
Sanitary Conveniences: Not separate for sexes ...	–	–	–	–
Other offences ... (Not including offences relating to Home Work or offences under the Sections mentioned in the Schedule to the Ministry of Health (Factories and Workshops Transfer of Powers) Order, 1921, and re-enacted in the Third Schedule to the Factories Act, 1937.	–	–	–	–
Total ...	3	3	–	–